

errors which he found in it. Por the rest, his time was largely spent in researches respecting the proposed version of " The Heptameron," of which he was editor.

Meanwhile Vizetelly & Co. were still issuing translations of modern French fiction, and Mr. George Moore, having occasion to go to Paris, spoke on the firm's behalf to Zola respecting " La Terre," which book the novelist was then preparing. An arrangement was made for the sale of the British rights to Vizetelly & Co., who then knew virtually nothing of the work, apart from, the fact that it would deal with the French peasantry. Some time afterwards, however, Zola supplied a brief outline of his book in a letter which has been already quoted.¹ Then various delays ensued, several months elapsing before proofs of the earlier chapters were forwarded to Vizetelly & Co. Those proofs were handed to a translator with whom some difficulty arose, in such wise that they were transferred to another, and Ernest Vizetelly was requested to read and check the English proofs, a task which he occasionally undertook in connection with various translations. He was immediately struck by the boldness of Zola's story, which seemed to surpass in outspokenness any of the novelist's previous works. And at the very outset he deemed certain excisions and alterations

advisable.

For instance, he found one of the characters, Hyacinthe Fouan, called by the nickname of "Jesus Christ," and afflicted with a nasty infirmity. The nickname did not particularly surprise him, for during the many years he had spent in Paris, he had known more than one young artistic cultivating, notably as regards hair and beard, a resemblance

¹ See *ante*, j*. 231.